

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs

Administrative Issuance System

DCRA Bulletin No. 2-01A-09

SUBJECT: Emergency Raze Protocol (ERP)

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 12, 2009

EXPIRATION OR REPLACEMENT: Upon revision

PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY:

To establish a uniform procedure for the emergency razing of structures in the District of Columbia in order to protect the health and safety of individuals impacted by the structure.

SCOPE:

All current employees in the Inspection, Permitting and Enforcement Divisions. The Chief Building Inspector, Permit Operations Division Chief, and Deputy Director of Enforcement are responsible for ensuring that the procedures for the emergency razing of structures in the District of Columbia are properly followed and enforced.

PROVISIONS:

The following criteria must be met to authorize an emergency raze.

1. Any structure in the District of Columbia that creates a life-or-health threatening condition that imminently endangers the health or safety of the tenant or occupant of the premises or the surrounding community.
2. Any structure in the District of Columbia that is determined by the Director, or designee, to be unsafe and requires immediate action because it is unsalvageable and creates an imminent danger.
3. Any structure in the District of Columbia that is in a state of structural collapse or has the potential for structural collapse.

PROTOCOL:

This protocol establishes clear direction for the handling of emergency razes. Upon notification of a structure that may meet any of the established criteria, the Deputy for Communication and Customer Service Relations shall send an email, flagged for urgency, to the Emergency Raze Coordinator (ERC) and Program Manager for Specialty Inspections, copying the Chief Building Inspector (CBI), to begin the emergency raze protocol.

1. An inspector shall inspect the property immediately and determine whether or not the structure meets any of the established criteria. Should the property meet any of the established criteria, the inspector shall:
 - placard the building with a "Danger" sign.

NOTE: *DAIS Bulletins are strictly procedural in nature and have direct applicability only to DCRA employees under the authority of the Director*

INQUIRIES: DCRA, Performance Management, 202-442-8942

DISTRIBUTION: Director, Deputy Directors, Program Managers, Division Chiefs, and DCRA employees

BULLETIN EXPIRES: Upon notification

DCRA Bulletin No. 2-01A-09

- photographically document all elements that are causing the hazardous condition.
 - create a CAP and forward supporting documents to the ERC.
2. The ERC prepares documentation and evidence for CBI determination.
 3. The CBI shall review the report from the field inspector and determine whether or not the structure is salvageable. In making this determination, the CBI may:
 - order the owner of the building to produce a structural analysis demonstrating that the building is safe;
 - order the owner to secure or remove the building as expeditiously as possible
 - require additional inspections to ascertain the true condition of the building.
 - initiate other actions that are deemed necessary.
 4. Once the CBI determines that a structure meets any of the established criteria, the ERC shall:
 - contact all major utilities to determine the status of connected utilities. If the utilities are connected, the ERC shall inform the utility providers of the emergency condition of the building and request immediate disconnection.
 - write an NOV stating that the building must be razed to rectify any potential hazards to life and limb.
 - have the NOV served personally on the property owner or agent. The ERC shall also have the building posted, and the notice to the owner shall be sent by regular mail to the last known address.
 5. The ERC shall concurrently transmit to the Enforcement Division all required documentation needed to perform the raze including but not limited to: copies of the NOV, photographic evidence, and any information deemed necessary by the Enforcement Division to successfully carry out the raze.
 6. As soon as the utility providers have communicated with the ERC that utilities are disconnected, the CBI shall contact the Permits Division, by email flagged for urgency, authorizing an emergency Raze Permit.
 7. The Permits Division shall issue an emergency raze permit to a specified contractor or to Enforcement.
 8. The Enforcement Division will secure a contractor to perform the raze and the Deputy Director for Enforcement will sign a "Notice to Proceed", authorizing the contractor to perform the raze.
 9. If the property owner or agent was personally served, the razing of the property can occur **no sooner than 12 hours after the time of service**, unless the unsafe structure jeopardizes the public safety and must be razed or secured without delay.
 10. If personal service fails, then the razing of the property can occur **no sooner than 5 days from the date of mailing** of a NOV.
 11. Throughout the process the ERC shall maintain a raze log that documents each step of the process and the results.

NOTE: DAIS Bulletins are strictly procedural in nature and have direct applicability only to DCRA employees under the authority of the Director

INQUIRIES: DCRA, Performance Management, 202-442-8942

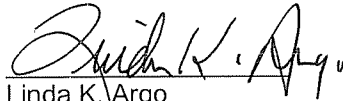
DISTRIBUTION: Director, Deputy Directors, Program Managers, Division Chiefs, and DCRA employees

BULLETIN EXPIRES: Upon notification

DCRA Bulletin No. 2-01A-09

12. After the razing is complete, enforcement then contacts scheduling by email, flagged for urgency, to schedule a Final plumbing and Raze inspection.
13. ERC communicates closure of the case to senior staff and Deputy Director for Communication and Customer Service.

For more information or clarification, contact Don Maseoro, Chief Building Inspector at (202) 481-3545, Lennox Douglas, Division Chief, Permit Operations Division at (202) 442-4589, or Paul Waters, Deputy Director for Enforcement and Legislative Affairs at (202) 442-8410.


Linda K. Argo
Director

Date 1/09/09

NOTE: DAIS Bulletins are strictly procedural in nature and have direct applicability only to DCRA employees under the authority of the Director

INQUIRIES: DCRA, Performance Management, 202-442-8942

DISTRIBUTION: Director, Deputy Directors, Program Managers, Division Chiefs, and DCRA employees

BULLETIN EXPIRES: Upon notification